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Summary record of the 4th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 9 October 2018, at 10 a.m.

Chair:	Mr. Skinner-Klée Arenales	(Guatemala)
later:	Ms. Alateibi (Vice-Chair)	(United Arab Emirates)
later:	Mr. Skinner-Klée Arenales	(Guatemala)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

General debate (*continued*)

1. **Mr. Al-Kuwari** (Qatar) said that the optimal way to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development was through international cooperation and the adoption of comprehensive transitional measures based on different developmental levels and national priorities.

2. To align its national strategy for 2018–2022, Qatar had identified priorities in its National Vision 2030, in addition to developing a system for monitoring the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, progress on which had been described in its 2018 voluntary review. In 2017, his Government had co-hosted the High-level Conference on Financing for Development and the Means of Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that had resulted in the 10 "Doha Messages" on enhanced cooperation on the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

3. Unsustainable resource use, climate change, food insecurity, malnutrition, political instability and conflict required a more comprehensive and coordinated response, particularly to assist least developed countries and provide equal opportunities for all, notably women, children and people with disabilities. Universal quality education had a pivotal role in ensuring a more sustainable future and capacity-building. International trade was a powerful enabler of sustained economic growth, sustainable development and an open, fair and non-discriminatory multilateral trading system.

4. Having increased its humanitarian assistance from almost $5 million in 2008 to $2 billion in 2017, Qatar was working to assist various countries and advance its strategic projects and relationships with its neighbours despite pressure to backtrack on its cooperation through the imposition of illegal politicized unilateral sanctions. Qatar would remain an active partner in the pursuit of sustainable development for the good of humanity.

5. **Mr. Boukadoum** (Algeria) said that the Committee remained pivotal in addressing global issues including economic growth, financing for development and poverty eradication; once a forum for cold war rivalry, it had since seen a reconciliation of divergent views on development; yet there was still a long way to go to achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. It was commonly agreed that there were sufficient human, financial, material and technological resources in the world to end hunger, eradicate poverty, and prevent or mitigate disease. The failure to achieve those objectives could be attributed to human selfishness and a lack of political will. Without adequate support, the Goals could not be achieved.

6. His delegation was proud to have co-facilitated with Denmark the reform of the United Nations development system to align it with the 2030 Agenda. General Assembly resolution 72/279 was not perfect, but represented the best attainable outcome of a multilateral process in a difficult context. While accountability and transparency were key components of an efficient reform process, it was essential to provide the United Nations development system with the necessary human, financial and logistic resources.

7. The Economic and Social Council, which, along with the General Assembly, was the most representative and democratic forum with the legitimacy to deliberate and make recommendations on global integrated economic and development policy, could and should be utilized for that purpose.

8. **Mr. Cisse** (Guinea) said that implementation of the 2030 Agenda called for the pooling of efforts to mobilize resources for large-scale funding of growth-generating sectors. Time was running out, and the required resources already existed. The only way for the international community to build peaceful, resilient, fair, equitable and sustainable societies was for least developed countries to mobilize their internal resources, developed countries to honour commitments made at international forums, and the private sector to boost global development.

9. Guinea was intensifying its efforts to implement programmes for the elimination of all forms of poverty; it was also working on the judicious exploitation of its extensive gold, diamond, bauxite and other mineral and water resources for the benefit of current and future generations and was promoting public and private investment. His Government had undertaken significant reforms through two five-year development plans; under its 2011–2015 five-year plan it had launched economic and social reforms and succeeded in slashing the national debt, helping to halve inflation, improve living conditions and reduce poverty. The 2016–2020 national economic and social development plan had been submitted to the advisory group in November 2017 and had generated funding pledges of $21 billion.

10. In July 2018, Guinea had presented its first voluntary national report on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, documenting a net increase in economic growth and remarkable improvement in socioeconomic indicators.

Recommendations had been made for statistical capacity-building to better evaluate implementation of the Goals, strengthening of coordination and public-private partnership in monitoring their implementation, dissemination of the Goals for improved ownership by all population sectors and development actors, and enhancement of internal resource mobilization to boost growth in all domains.

11. **Mr. Rasuli** (Afghanistan) said that globalization and international interdependency had transformed development into a multifaceted concept linked to all domains, from social development to peace and security, that required a sustainable approach with long-term solutions. The 2030 Agenda provided tools for ending poverty, hunger and inequality, taking action on climate change and environmental degradation, improving access to health and education, and enhancing cooperation for a peaceful and prosperous world free from violence and terrorism.

12. Under its national peace and development framework, his Government had aligned its plans and policies with the 2030 Agenda. In November 2018, it would hold a ministerial conference with the United Nations to discuss development and reform strategies, at which it would provide updates on the progress made and explain how development could help promote peace and security nationally.

13. Although headway had been made, implementation of the 2030 Agenda remained a particular challenge for countries in conflict and post-conflict situations. His delegation considered that the strengthening of the connection between peace and security and development should be a priority for the Committee. Financing for the Goals was also crucial. Afghanistan affirmed the primary importance of official development assistance (ODA) to achieving sustainable development and economic growth, particularly for least developed countries and landlocked developing countries. Member States should come together to ensure the proper implementation of the Paris Agreement, and honour their financial commitments for enhancing adaptation capacity in developing countries.

14. **Ms. Mills** (Jamaica) said that unevenness in global economic growth posed continuing challenges for developing countries, and particularly for small, vulnerable and highly indebted economies such as that of Jamaica. However, her Government remained confident that through concerted effort and partnerships, it would be possible to overcome the challenges and achieve poverty eradication and sustainable development for all.

15. Highly indebted middle-income countries like Jamaica were poised for economic transition, but their potential was gravely threatened by having to choose between high debt repayments and catalytic growth spending, highlighting the importance of the differentiated use of borrowed resources. Effective public investment in infrastructure and productive capacity could positively influence fiscal space and debt sustainability, but should be subject to appropriate public debt management. International financial institutions should not treat all types of debt in the same way.

16. Climate change remained an existential threat for the peoples of the Caribbean and other small island States, as evidenced during the 2017 hurricane season. Jamaica fully supported the development of a climate change vulnerability index for better channelling of international resources to the most susceptible countries, and welcomed the proposal of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to convene an event with public and private stakeholders to help build resilience in the Caribbean. Her Government looked forward to collaboration with development partners on long-term solutions to catastrophic events, and with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean on its debt-for-climate-adaptation swap proposal.

17. An enormous pool of capital needed to be mobilized to achieve improved developmental outcomes. It was clear that traditional approaches to financing development would be insufficient. Quality of financing was also crucial for identifying catalytic interventions to drive positive outcomes across multiple Goals. In 2017, her Government had approved a road map for the implementation of the Goals. The real challenge was the implementation of policies for rapid and sustained progress on the Goals in the context of limited fiscal space. Jamaica had presented its first voluntary national review in 2018 and had been pleased to share the many lessons learned and the experiences gained.

18. **Ms. Khyne** (Myanmar) said that accelerated and concerted efforts were needed to achieve the targets of the 2030 Agenda. Myanmar underscored the need for synergy and coherence in implementing the 2030 Agenda, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Paris Agreement and the New Urban Agenda. Achieving the Goals would require meaningful partnerships among all actors and full and timely fulfilment of the commitments made. Least developed countries needed special attention through mobilization

of resources, capacity-building and technology transfer to ensure equitable progress.

19. Myanmar welcomed the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation as an important opportunity to enhance the individual and collective pursuit of sustained economic growth and sustainable development. Science, technology and innovation were critical enablers of accelerated progress. Within and among countries, there remained uneven access to and use of information and communications technologies, which cut across all the Goals and must be harnessed to eliminate poverty and inequality, boost shared prosperity and develop knowledge societies. Technical and financial support for the technology bank being operationalized for least developed countries in 2018 would be crucial in bridging technology gaps.

20. Climate change had become an existential threat to every country. Despite the limited progress on implementing the Paris Agreement, Myanmar looked forward to a successful twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in December 2018.

21. Myanmar's Sustainable Development Plan for 2018–2030 was aligned with the 2030 Agenda and her Government looked forward to the cooperation and support of development partners and international organizations. Myanmar remained strongly committed to global development agreements in line with its national development needs and priorities.

22. **Ms. Theofili** (Greece) said that the post-2015 era had merged the poverty and sustainability agendas and provided a framework for dealing more effectively with a growing number of interdependent global policy issues. The 2030 Agenda provided an ambitious framework for equitable and sustainable development and was consistent with the interests, values and principles for which Greece had worked globally for decades.

23. Faced with the severe economic crisis and the migration and refugee crisis of the past decade, Greece needed a new social contract. In July 2018, her country had presented its first voluntary national review. Her Government's foreign and security policies were helping achieve the Sustainable Development Goals through trade and investment, development cooperation, economic and sectoral cooperation, and the promotion of peace, security, respect for human rights, gender equality, the rule of law and good governance. Faced with challenges in its region, Greece was a pillar of stability, promoting collaboration, dialogue and mutual understanding.

24. Greece supported the Secretary-General's reform agenda and was committed to constructive participation in its implementation. Eradicating poverty, addressing inequalities and providing decent working conditions demanded a more inclusive model of development that promoted sustainable growth, created jobs, reduced inequality and did not harm the environment. One national priority was a shift towards a circular economy and sustainable consumption and production patterns, including renewable and sustainable energy. The national implementation plan for the Goals was scheduled for 2019 and fostered an integrated approach to planning and implementation at different governance levels, promoting policy coherence for sustainable development.

25. **Mr. Muhammad Bande** (Nigeria) said that his delegation welcomed the convening of the High-Level Meeting on Financing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the reaffirmation of the need to focus investment on long-term gains, vulnerable countries and sectors, and better data for measuring the Sustainable Development Goals and ensuring equitable access to benefits of new technologies. Nigeria was implementing a national social investment programme providing safety nets for the poor, welfare for the unemployed, and job creation and skills enhancement for the underprivileged, and had also introduced an economic recovery and growth plan aimed to ensure inclusive growth, sustainable development, and investment in key social sectors.

26. The unprecedented impacts of climate change were particularly devastating for the poorest countries. Desertification was also a pressing problem, including in Nigeria. His Government had implemented climate change response policies and strategies, and was collaborating with other Governments and agencies on replenishing Lake Chad, which supported millions of people and had shrunk by 90 per cent in recent decades, fuelling large-scale migration, conflicts and serious humanitarian consequences. He called on the international community to implement the relevant United Nations conventions.

27. Skyrocketing illicit financial flows were a major drain on the resources of developing countries, reducing tax revenues, exacerbating poverty and inequality, and undermining sustainable development. His Government, in partnership with Norway and other development partners, had held a number of conferences and side events on the subject. One effective deterrent was the recovery and return of stolen funds and assets

to countries of origin, and Nigeria would seek the commitment of Member States to update and implement the corresponding General Assembly resolution.

28. Despite rapid growth in information and communications technologies, the digital divide remained a real challenge to the implementation of outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, and developing and least developed countries continued to lag in broadband access and use. Nigeria also expressed deep concern about the impact of the current asymmetric global environment on the efforts of developing and least developed countries to implement the 2030 Agenda, and called for serious attention to be paid to difficult macroeconomic conditions and the effects of natural disasters, climate change, environmental degradation, humanitarian crises and conflicts. Concrete and immediate action was needed to create the necessary enabling environment at all levels for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

29. **Mr. Binmubarak** (Yemen) said that conflict particularly affected countries in the Middle East. Consequently, ambitious programmes adopted in 2015 were more important than ever and must be accompanied by humanitarian assistance in emergencies. To implement the 2030 Agenda, it was necessary to achieve peace and stability to support countries in conflict or post-conflict situations, including some least developed countries. There could be no peace without development and no development without peace.

30. The coup d'état against the legitimate Government had resulted in poorer living conditions and the spread of disease. In cooperation with the Security Council and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, his Government was working to persuade coup groups to participate in the peace process and implement the necessary resolutions with the aim of progressing from humanitarian assistance to reconstruction. It was working with donors including the World Bank and the Arab Alliance on a comprehensive reconstruction plan fostering increased international assistance and incorporating implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

31. Yemen's expanded use of renewable energy had unfortunately resulted from the shutdown of its electricity grid, a lack of fuel and damage to the national network. His Government had prioritized the energy sector in sustainable development efforts, and would formulate a plan to combat climate change and support the agricultural sector. Yemen had experienced earthquakes and floods, and a hurricane was currently bearing down on its coasts. He called on all Member States to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and protect the environment. His Government supported the Secretary-General's initiative to reform the United Nations development system, which was necessary to avoid overlap and duplication between funds and programmes.

32. **Ms. Quiel Murcia** (Panama) said that multilateral cooperation, involving not only economic resources, but also the transfer of capacities and best practices, was vital to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The challenges faced by middle-income countries like Panama must be addressed. Metrics beyond income thresholds must be devised that reflected the multidimensional nature of poverty and development. Financing the 2030 Agenda still presented challenges for developing countries, particularly in harmonizing a consistent framework that coordinated actors, instruments and finance. Private sector activities including direct foreign investment could contribute to the achievement of the Goals by creating employment, providing goods and services, and generating tax revenue, all of which helped fund infrastructure and essential services.

33. It was important to reaffirm the commitment to combat illicit financial flows, which limited the ability to fund development, and to enhance international financial transparency and tax cooperation. The participation of developing countries in discussions on global economic governance was crucial to guarantee respect for sovereignty, diversity and development. New technologies and financial inclusion were powerful tools that could enhance equitable access to funding and help achieve the Goals.

34. Time was running out to implement the major agendas. United Nations system support was key to helping developing countries eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development, and in particular to assisting middle-income countries in facing their specific challenges. The repositioning of the United Nations development system would facilitate the strengthening of South-South cooperation. As an important regional venue for the revitalization of the resident coordinator system, Panama reiterated its willingness to utilize its bridging role in maximizing the transfer of knowledge and best practices for sustainable development.

35. **Ms. Rosa Suazo** (Honduras) said that climate change, growing inequality, persistent poverty and hunger, accelerated urbanization and environmental degradation were challenges facing developing and middle-income countries which must be considered in substantive discussions concerning the implementation and follow-up of the 2030 Agenda. A holistic approach

was needed for transition towards sustainable and resilient societies that ensured responsible management of finite natural resources and the fundamental human right of access to basic services. It was a matter of concern that access to concessional finance declined as the income of countries increased, leaving middle-income countries and others with ever-decreasing access to affordable financing in the face of greater demands and new development challenges.

36. The current classification model reduced poverty and development progress to a single variable which was inconsistent with the more complex economic and social reality and overlooked hard-won development achievements and growing inequality. Cooperation resources for development could not be appropriately prioritized, making assistance less effective. Multidimensional indicators were needed to measure diverse development realities and accurately channel resources. Social and economic policies were inextricably linked and must be refocused to eradicate poverty. Income inequality had fallen among countries, yet risen within countries. Continued insufficient investment, consumption and decent employment were eroding the right of all in democratic societies to share in progress and remained a major challenge.

37. Sustainable development would not be achieved without measures countering climate change and natural disasters, which had resulted in massive economic losses in 2017 and impacted public health, food and water security, and migration. Efforts that did not take account of climate change would undo the development gains of recent decades and endanger domestic stability and world peace.

38. While some forms of discrimination against women and girls were in decline, gender inequality continued to deprive women of rights and opportunities, and necessitated efforts to address unjust social attitudes and develop progressive legal frameworks. The reform of the United Nations development system was essential in order to reinforce its relevance and its ability to effectively achieve the Goals.

39. **Mr. Duque Estrada Meyer** (Brazil) said that the search for consensus in the Committee should never serve the cause of unilateralism. A multilateral dynamic in negotiations should be preserved, with all participants contributing to the benefit of the whole. Collective efforts on the 2030 Agenda must now build on the outcomes arising from the high-level political forum on sustainable development and take into account the cross-cutting importance of discussions on the means of implementation. The Committee should have a decisive role in advancing concrete development financing options.

40. The importance of ensuring adequate flows of international development cooperation could not be overstated. ODA commitments must be met, and greater domestic resource mobilization in developing countries also warranted closer attention. The 2030 Agenda was a common endeavour and entailed responsibilities for many actors, including the private sector and civil society. Engagement of private partners to advance development should be based on transparency and accountability. Further action was needed to reform global governance, make international institutions more representative and increase the participation of developing countries in global decision-making.

41. Welcoming the efforts to reform the United Nations development system, he stressed that national Governments must be consulted at all stages of the elaboration, execution and evaluation of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks. The separation of functions between the resident coordinator and the resident representative could improve interagency collaboration, enhance efficiency and ensure increased spending on implementation of development activities; at the same time, however, the impact on the work of the funds, programmes and specialized agencies should be borne in mind. Core resources were the bedrock of operational activities for development and embodied North-South cooperation and respect for the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities; non-core resources were a complement to, not a substitute for, core resources. His delegation fully supported the findings and recommendations of the Open-ended Working Group established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 72/226.

42. *Ms. Alateibi (United Arab Emirates), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

43. **Ms. Siblini** (Lebanon) said that reform of the United Nations development system was needed to help developing countries and middle-income countries achieve the 2030 Agenda in accordance with national priorities. The United Nations had been an important partner in peacebuilding, development, humanitarian and peacekeeping activities in Lebanon for decades. Members of the Lebanese diaspora were continuing to make immense contributions to the economic and social development of both their home country, and their countries of destination, providing leverage for the Lebanese economy. Lebanon had actively engaged in negotiations on a global pact for safe orderly and regular migration to be adopted in December 2018.

44. In its first voluntary national review in July 2018, her Government had detailed progress on the 2030 Agenda in areas including health, education, women's empowerment, poverty eradication and small business support. Based on the principle of shared responsibility, Lebanon's development agenda would need to be financed through highly concessional lending and grants, mobilization of private sector resources, and increased support from the international community. Financing would also serve to upgrade infrastructure, which was overstretched by repercussions of the Syrian crisis and the influx of over 1.2 million displaced Syrians, compounding the economic, social, environmental and security challenges facing the country.

45. Lebanon was focused on improving its economy and the livelihoods of its citizens, achieving sustainable development and preserving its natural resources and cultural diversity. It had signed two agreements for offshore oil and gas exploration and production, with drilling slated to start in 2019. A new budget and government following elections in May 2018 had given fresh impetus to the growth and employment vision and prioritization of reforms. Her delegation would again be relying on international support for the adoption of the 2018 resolution entitled "Oil slick on Lebanese shores" calling on Israel to accept responsibility for prompt and adequate compensation to Lebanon for the costs of repairing the environmental damage caused by the 2006 oil spill.

46. **Mr. Ma** Zhaoxu (China) said that action was crucial to achieving the 2030 Agenda. The Committee should facilitate multilateral dialogue and consultations among all parties on an equal footing. It was important to focus on priority areas and on the quality of development. Member States should incorporate the Sustainable Development Goals into their national development strategies and jointly embark on an innovative, coordinated, green, open and shared development path. The international community should prioritize development issues in its global macropolicy framework, focusing on areas including poverty reduction, infrastructure building, education and health, and provide technology transfer and capacity-building support to developing countries.

47. There was a need to deepen international development cooperation, optimize development partnership and ensure sufficient resources in order to address unbalanced and inadequate development in developing countries. Global development cooperation should be centred around the United Nations, with South-North cooperation as the main channel, supplemented by South-South cooperation. Developed countries should honour their ODA and climate finance commitments on time and support developing countries in pursuing a development path best suited to their own situations.

48. It was important to uphold multilateralism, as the bedrock for sustainable development. The World Trade Organization (WTO) rules were currently sustaining shocks and the multilateral trading system was being challenged. Firm commitment to multilateralism and opposition to unilateralism would affect the future development of all countries. All Governments should commit to the goal of cooperation for win-win results, based on rules and order, equity and justice, and maintain an international system centred on the United Nations and a multilateral trading system centred around WTO so as to strengthen global economic governance and create a favourable international environment for development.

49. During 40 years of reform and opening up, China had achieved annual economic growth of over 9 per cent and lifted 700 million people out of poverty — yet it remained a developing country. It had contributed to economic globalization by sharing its development opportunities and results with all countries. In recent years, it had contributed more than 30 per cent of worldwide economic growth. Through the Belt and Road initiative of President Xi Jinping, over 130 countries and international organizations had signed cooperation agreements with China; the second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation would be held in 2019. China's first International Import Expo to be held in November 2018 was another initiative to open its markets to the world. No matter how the international situation evolved, China would never close up or retreat, but would open its doors even wider.

50. **Mr. Favre** (Switzerland) said that with just 12 years remaining to achieve the ambitious goals of the 2030 Agenda, the Committee must provide guidance on global sustainable development and related areas, and follow-up on global issues that did not have their own follow-up process. Efficient procedures were needed, and duplication must be avoided within and beyond the Committee. The Committee should only discuss matters that were clearly within its jurisdiction and were relevant to the major concerns of the twenty-first century; at the same time, the number of resolutions must be limited, as many of them were relics from the past. Regrettably, the Committee had often found it impossible to reach consensus during the previous session, a trend which was all the more concerning when the disagreements related to issues beyond the Committee's jurisdiction or not crucial to the

resolutions. Switzerland called for a culture of negotiation based on compromise and consensus.

51. At the current session, the first session since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 72/279, it was important for the Committee's work to be inspired by the reform process and for draft resolutions to be adopted to act as guidelines for implementation of that process.

52. **Mr. Annakou** (Libya) said that development and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals were being impeded in developing countries by challenges such as conflict, slow economic growth and high unemployment among young people, who constituted the majority of the work force. Achieving the three pillars of sustainable development required strenuous, concerted effort by all countries. His delegation supported the Secretary-General's repositioning of the United Nations development system, which should focus particularly on helping conflict and post-conflict countries including Libya to work towards security, stability and reconstruction.

53. Reforming the development system to facilitate achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals required a progression from crisis management to crisis prevention. Shortcomings needed to be addressed in the response to conflict-related humanitarian disasters such as forced displacement, famine and human rights violations. An integrated approach needed to be taken to implementation of the Goals, without duplication of effort, overstretching of resources or overlaps in funds and agencies. Separating the functions of the resident representative and the resident coordinator was crucial to ensuring impartiality of coordination and monitoring at the country team level.

54. Unable to control its borders, Libya suffered from instability due to illegal migration, organized crime and human trafficking. Migration was a multifaceted international problem whose burden should not rest solely on transit countries. It was necessary to address the root causes, promote development in countries of origin, and combat organized crime gangs in countries of origin and destination. Countries that operated as safe havens for funds from illicit financial flows, from which Libya also suffered, must immediately end that practice and assist countries of origin in recovering their assets. Libya was relying on the United Nations system and specialized agencies, the World Bank and IMF to develop a mechanism for addressing illicit financial flows and asset recovery to which developing and developed countries would be committed.

55. **Ms. Tshering** (Bhutan) said that the challenges facing multilateralism brought with them greater opportunities for achieving a safer, happier and more prosperous world. As a small developing country, Bhutan appreciated the Secretary-General's initiative for reform of the United Nations development system, which was the key to an Organization fit for purpose and better able to fulfil the 2030 Agenda, and looked forward to full operationalization of the reinvigorated resident coordinator system, which would provide essential strategic support to programme countries, particularly those in special situations, in implementing the 2030 Agenda.

56. She hoped that her Government's contribution to the voluntary trust fund would encourage others to support the fund. Basing development on the concept of Gross National Happiness, which was premised on the well-being of the population, Bhutan had presented a voluntary national review in July 2018, and looked forward to exploring partnerships to strengthen delivery of sustainable development.

57. 2018 had seen the highest number of least developed countries qualifying for graduation, which was an indication of success of the international community, in partnership with national Governments, in bringing about sustainable development in the most vulnerable countries. She called on the international community to continue supporting countries that were transitioning towards graduation, while bearing in mind that graduation must be sustainable, and should not set in motion a reversal of past development achievements. Her delegation looked forward to the General Assembly's endorsement of the decision of the Economic and Social Council concerning Bhutan's graduation of Bhutan in 2023.

58. On the environmental pillar of sustainable development, Bhutan urged all States to heed the unequivocal message from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change stressing the urgent but achievable need to avoid exceeding global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

59. Fair and effective governance was critical in ensuring development benefits for people and the planet. Empowering the public to participate effectively in decision-making was crucial. The third parliamentary elections since the introduction of democracy in 2008 were underway in Bhutan, with primary round voter turnout at over 65 per cent, an increase of 11 percent compared with 2013. More Bhutanese women than men had exercised their right to vote. Her Government was confident that the political transition in Bhutan would be a smooth and seamless process.

60. **Mr. Poudyal** (Nepal) said that implementation of the 2030 Agenda was slow, casting doubt on the

achievement of the Goals. Leaving no one behind was not possible while millions of people remained in poverty, which, together with hunger, illiteracy and exclusion, bred anger, conflicts, instability and terrorism. Inclusive implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals should be pursued with national ownership and leadership as well as robust international partnership. Least developed countries, land-locked developing countries and small island developing States required immediate attention.

61. Nepal attached great importance to the United Nations development system reform, and was confident that the reinvigorated resident coordinator system would better serve Member States in implementing the 2030 Agenda. At the same time, it was important to respect national policy space, leadership and ownership. The benefits of globalization were not being shared equitably. Despite continued global economic growth, a lack of inclusion, equity and social justice left many people marginalized and deprived. That unsustainable trend was likely to be exacerbated by the technological revolution creating a large segment of "irrelevant people", a situation that was morally hollow, economically inefficient and socially destabilizing.

62. Mountain countries and small island countries faced an existential threat from climate change, for which they bore the brunt despite contributing the least. A coordinated, robust and just response was needed that respected the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. The Paris Agreement must be implemented in full, and international cooperation for adaptation and mitigation ensured through more accessible climate finance for the neediest countries. His Government was committed to socioeconomic transformation and sustained peace and stability and accorded priority to implementation of the 2030 Agenda, which was integral to Nepal's graduation from the least developed countries category.

63. **Mr. Inguanez** (Malta) said that the ambitious 2030 Agenda had the potential to drastically improve the lives of all citizens of the world while safeguarding the planet's future; national ownership was key to its full and effective implementation. In Malta, a 2012 act affirmed the mainstreaming of sustainable development across government, and a new strategy was being devised to set out the development path to 2050. The Sustainable Development Policy was being aligned with the 2030 Agenda to better address future challenges and opportunities and formulate a clear direction for long-term maximization of the three pillars of sustainable development.

64. Malta had presented its first voluntary national review in 2018, outlining policies and initiatives that had been helping to attain the Goals and had resulted in one of the lowest unemployment rates in Europe. Growth in the real gross domestic product (GDP) and employment was forecast to remain strong, and the Europe 2020 target of 70 per cent employment had already been attained. Employment opportunities coupled with support structures and financial incentives had increased the number of people entering or re-entering the labour market.

65. By fostering economic growth, international trade helped address poverty reduction, food security, job creation, gender equality and environmental sustainability. It was time to devise trade and development policies at the global level to allow for fairer and more equitable participation by ensuring the appropriate use of competitive advantages. Governments needed to promote responsible business conduct, as global value chains represented the bulk of trade flows. Sustainable development was key to Malta's long-term prosperity. An island with limited natural resources, Malta needed smart strategies to maximize its potential while preserving the natural habitat; his Government would continue its work towards the gradual implementation of 2030 Agenda at the national level.

66. **Mr. Gonzalez** (Colombia) said that his Government continued to attach priority to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda; it believed that the only way to achieve equity was to step up efforts to achieve sustainable development, with the involvement of civil society and the private and social sectors, among other stakeholders. The environment was a focus of strategies to transform consumption and production models for the benefit of future generations.

67. His Government was committed to biodiversity protection, renewable energy, climate action and environmental education, and was seeking to align productivity with conservation. In order to combat climate change, it was essential to focus on solutions and to take urgent action to meet the targets of the Paris Agreement. Priority should be accorded to the means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The need for increased mobilization and faster operationalization of internal and external resources to achieve full implementation of the 2030 Agenda was of the utmost importance to Colombia as a middle-income Latin American country.

68. His Government also accorded priority to entrepreneurship, as part of an economic recovery programme that recognized businesses of all sizes as

strategic development partners. It believed that private-sector bottlenecks must be eliminated to enhance the country's competitiveness. The orange economy was linking cultural heritage with sustainable tourism that was developing rapidly alongside peacebuilding and was boosting employment and foreign exchange earnings. Colombia was also committed to updating its information and communications technologies by generating investment, preparing for the fifth generation of cellular mobile communications and increasing bandwidth.

69. Science, technology, innovation and sustainable development were closely linked. His Government prioritized areas including technology transfer under favourable conditions, research and development, and cooperation on technical, tax and commercial matters. Poverty eradication was the greatest obstacle to sustainable development, and called for cooperation among States, the United Nations system, academia, civil society and other stakeholders.

70. **Ms. Eckels-Currie** (United States of America) said that the Committee had become weighed down by stale debates informed by long-discredited ideologies and narrow interests, with far too little attention being paid to the true drivers of sustainable development such as the rule of law, human rights, good governance, women's empowerment, and the participation of civil society and the private sector. The incorporation of language targeting a domestic political audience into multilateral documents was a blatant misuse of such documents that should not be supported. A number of resolutions could benefit from biennialization or triennialization if Member States would exercise the necessary self-discipline. Limited resources should not be wasted on outdated, irrelevant and ineffective resolutions. The Committee's work should be conducted on time, during normal business hours, by enforcing clear deadlines.

71. At the current session, her delegation was again prepared to call for votes on resolutions dealing with sensitive trade matters; her Government sought fair and reciprocal trade, open investment environments, transparent agreements between nations, and improved connectivity. The United States enjoyed strong and growing trade relationships across the globe and welcomed efforts to bolster those relationships; however, it would act in its sovereign interest, and would not take trade policy direction from the United Nations. The United Nations must respect the independent mandates of other processes and institutions, including trade negotiations, and not involve itself in decisions and actions in other forums such as WTO. There should be no expectation that the United States would heed decisions by the Economic and Social Council or the General Assembly on such issues, including initiatives that undermined incentives for innovation, such as calls for technology transfer that was not voluntary and on mutually agreed terms.

72. The United States was the world's largest provider of ODA. However, the scale and impact of private capital, domestic resource mobilization, philanthropy, remittances and other financial flows, and enhanced commerce and investment, dwarfed the role of ODA in development finance and could increase the self-reliance of developing countries. When investing in developing countries, her Government sought to ensure that its work did not displace the private sector or subsidize projects that should find their own financing, and that its investments upheld the highest standards of governance and environmental, social and labour rights. Her Government had recently signed into law the Better Utilization of Investments Leading to Development (BUILD) Act, establishing a reformed, modern development finance institution, the United States International Development Finance Corporation.

73. The private sector was a driver and sustainer of development; its role within the United Nations should be re-envisioned accordingly. The United Nations should embrace working with the private sector and make it easier to forge partnerships with commercial firms all over the world. It also needed to support the vital role of women in sustainable economic growth and make sure that they had every opportunity to earn their way to economic leadership roles and participate in the global economy. Closing the global gender gap in labour markets could increase worldwide GDP by as much as $28 trillion by 2025. The United States had recently launched the 2X Global Women's Initiative, which would mobilize more than $1 billion from the private sector to projects that supported women in developing countries.

74. **Mr. Suárez Moreno** (Venezuela) said that the 2030 Agenda was being implemented in the midst of global uncertainty. Venezuela strongly supported multilateralism. Member States needed to work together to prevent the goals of the 2030 Agenda from being undermined through restrictions and conditionalities of the means of implementation. Despite difficulties, his Government had strengthened cooperation mechanisms with the United Nations through projects and programmes that combined the three pillars of sustainable development with national plans and policies.

75. Sovereign management of natural resources was an important means of leveraging economic and social

development. Venezuela rejected the unilateral promulgation and implementation of economic, financial or commercial measures that restricted the right of self-determination, violated sovereignty, and were incompatible with the Charter of the United Nations and international law. Unilateral measures, such as those which had been applied against Venezuela and other countries of the South, impeded normal political, economic, social and cultural development and had an adverse impact on human rights.

76. A fair multilateral trading system based on special and differential treatment was needed, incorporating the principles of solidarity, cooperation, complementarity and respect for sovereignty. International development cooperation must be based on national priorities, strategies and development plans. Member States still had key responsibility for formulating policies and defining development priorities. Corporate interests must not be promoted to the detriment of populations. Developed countries needed to meet their ODA commitments as a matter of urgency. His delegation reiterated the importance of South-South cooperation, as a complement to, and not a substitute for, North-South cooperation.

77. A radical change in production and consumption patterns, particularly in developed countries, was needed to address climate change, which was expected to intensify, resulting in widespread damage and disease, and a need for increased international aid to countries affected. Venezuela had ratified the Paris Agreement and reaffirmed its commitment to efforts to combat global warming.

78. **Mr. Al Habib** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that eradicating poverty was the immediate priority in achieving sustainable development and required an environment that facilitated the necessary means of implementation in developing countries. Those countries continued to face enormous challenges that were partly rooted in global economic, financial and trade imbalances, as well as poverty and inequality. A universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory, depoliticized and equitable multilateral trading system was an indispensable requirement for sustained economic growth and sustainable development.

79. Multilateralism offered the possibility of addressing the complex challenges faced by a growing number of countries through collective action. The very existence of the United Nations, and of its development system, was proof that multilateralism worked. The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action signed with the Islamic Republic of Iran was a concrete example of a successful multilateral solution of global issues. Unilateralism, and the imposition of laws and regulations with extraterritorial impact against developing countries, not only undermined the principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations but also adversely affected the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

80. Development should be at the centre of the work of the United Nations. The operational activities for development should support the achievement of the Goals by strengthening national capacities in developing countries based on national development needs, priorities and plans. Reform of the United Nations development system, including the reinvigorated resident coordinator system, should result in systemic and enhanced oversight and monitoring.

81. Developed countries must fully honour their commitments to developing countries, including the transfer of required technologies and investment. A majority of the population in developing countries were young people, whose potential could be tapped through visionary policies at the national level and a conducive international environment to contribute significantly to economic prosperity and social development.

82. Since the victory of the Islamic Revolution, a robust legal framework had been created in the Islamic Republic of Iran, providing a stable platform for national development policies, particularly for poverty eradication. Significant achievements had been made despite external challenges ranging from eight years of imposed war and the 30-year-long hosting of 3 million refugees to unfair restrictions and unilateral sanctions. Wars and domestic conflicts in West Asia forced millions of people into abject poverty, whose eradication was essential for regional stability and prosperity. The region also suffered from environmental issues including sand and dust storms, whose challenges and solutions had been discussed at the high-level interactive dialogue held in July 2018.

83. **Mr. Phansourivong** (Lao People's Democratic Republic) said that the 3 per cent growth in the world economy in 2017 had been unequally distributed, especially among least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, which required higher investment to meet their development needs and support implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

84. With a view to poverty eradication, the overarching goal of the 2030 Agenda and an indispensable requirement for achieving the Goals, the Lao People's Democratic Republic had mainstreamed the global development agendas in its current five-year national socioeconomic development plan. Public

financial management and revenue collection had also been strengthened to enhance domestic resource mobilization, and his Government had adopted a national sustainable development goal to address the problem of unexploded ordnance.

85. The United Nations needed to be made fit for purpose in order to respond effectively to modern challenges. His delegation supported the Secretary-General's reform initiative. The Organization and Member States must continue to prioritize development while promoting international peace, security and human rights. He expressed concerned at the decline in contributions to core funding for United Nations agencies, which would affect development programmes on the ground if it continued, and called on countries to fulfil their ODA commitments.

86. **Mr. Nakano** (Japan), expressing condolences to Indonesia for the devastation wrought by the recent earthquake and tsunami, said that the Committee needed to keep up with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and should avoid reopening issues agreed upon in 2015, such as the Sustainable Development Goals or the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. Based on the concept of human security, Japan was focusing its efforts on areas such as health, education, disaster risk reduction and gender equality. The Goals could not be achieved without the participation of the private sector or the effective use of science, technology and innovation. With regard to financial discipline, his delegation reiterated its position that unnecessary programme budget implications would be unacceptable.

87. As a co-facilitator of the recent high-level meeting on the fight against tuberculosis, Japan had helped bring about a unanimously endorsed political declaration on ending the disease. Half of the world's population currently lacked access to basic medical services, making it essential for every country to achieve universal health coverage. Japan was committed to mainstreaming disaster risk reduction as an integral part of the sustainable development agenda and sought to expedite full implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. Climate change had manifested more rapidly than expected, and all countries must engage with the same urgency. Japan strongly supported the Secretary-General's decision to convene the 2019 Climate Summit for full implementation of the Paris Agreement from 2020.

88. It was obvious that the Sustainable Development Goals could not be achieved without the active involvement of the private sector. His country would pursue deeper private sector engagement through negotiation of the agenda on global partnership, and highlighted the activities of the United Nations Global Compact and the International Chamber of Commerce. With a firm belief in the role of science, technology and innovation in achieving the sustainable development agenda, Japan had co-chaired the third annual Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals in 2018.

89. **Mr. Beleffi** (San Marino) said that the United Nations should increase its leadership role in global governance because of its deeply democratic nature, universal participation and undisputed legitimacy. Trust, inclusiveness and dialogue were essential to support multilateralism and its ability to produce concrete results at the global level.

90. In combination with the Paris Agreement, the 2030 Agenda was essential for building inclusive, resilient and peaceful societies and defining the vision of a safe society in which poverty had been eliminated, prosperity was shared and decent work was available. The eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions was the most difficult and important obstacle to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The 2030 Agenda emphasized universal respect for human rights and human dignity. Peace, justice, equality and non-discrimination were fundamental rights, the implementation of which was crucial for creating inclusive societies. While some progress had been made, there were marked inequalities both among and within countries in the implementation of the Agenda, which was the responsibility of individual States.

91. **Mr. Yaakob** (Malaysia) said that notable progress had been made in his country's economy, whose performance had been described by IMF as strong in 2018, with growth predictions of around 4.5 per cent for the next two years and potential qualification as a high-income nation by 2020. Nevertheless, his Government remained concerned about heightened volatility in the global economic and financial situation and urged all Member States to strengthen international financial regulations, ensure effective fiscal measures and help restore market confidence in order to stabilize financial markets and promote global economic growth; it also called for enhanced bilateral and regional cooperation and stood ready to explore options for advancing economic growth with all stakeholders.

92. Malaysia was on track to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. A five-year plan for 2016–2020 and a roadmap outlined the directions and specific national actions for achieving the Goals. His Government supported the Secretary-General's

initiative to reform the United Nations development system, including enhanced engagement with host Governments in mobilizing development activities, and hoped that the repositioning of the development system would help developing countries achieve the Goals while respecting national ownership and leadership.

93. As the host of the ninth World Urban Forum in February 2018, Malaysia welcomed the adoption of the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Cities 2030. His Government reiterated its support for South-South Cooperation as a vital element of international cooperation for development, and was continuing to engage developing nations by sharing its developmental experiences and expertise through the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme.

94. **Mr. Meza-Cuadra** (Peru) said that the Sustainable Development Goals had been incorporated into Peru's national development plans, prioritizing the eradication of poverty in all its forms, the strengthening of institutions, the rule of law and democratic governance. His Government also attached priority to reducing vulnerability to climate change and promoting low-emission development. It had passed a framework climate change law and a gender and climate change action plan.

95. His Government highlighted the importance of strengthening the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. The latest report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change warned of much graver immediate climate change consequences than previously anticipated, requiring transformation of the global economy at an unprecedented speed and scale. Governments had a moral obligation to protect the planet for future generations and guarantee the right to a healthy environment.

96. His Government supported the Secretary-General's reform initiative for the United Nations development system. The outcome of the 2018 ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development follow-up would inform a substantive discussion on implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. International trade facilitated wealth generation, poverty reduction and progress on sustainable development. WTO had an important role in guaranteeing stability, predictability and transparency in the multilateral trading system. Openness, international cooperation, multilateralism and United Nations support were more relevant than ever in addressing global challenges that were undermining the potential for development.

97. *Mr. Skinner-Klée Arenales (Guatemala) resumed the Chair.*

98. **Mr. Djani** (Indonesia) said that the United Nations could overcome global challenges to achieve lasting peace and fair and sustainable prosperity. Despite encouraging progress on some Sustainable Development Goals since their adoption in 2015, others were not on target, and some gains had been reversed. A high concentration of the poor still lived in many developing countries, and inequality was increasing. Addressing global warming and population growth would require sustained commitment beyond political cycles.

99. Disasters were reversing development gains in parts of the world. In that regard, Indonesia was deeply appreciative of the international assistance received following the earthquake and tsunami in Palu and Donggala; the country was still in recovery and would continue reconstruction to return life to normal in Palu. The Committee must enhance collaboration and partnership and take bold action to achieve the Goals in a timely manner, focusing on pockets of poverty and promoting upward mobility. People must be empowered by facilitating economic opportunities and financial accessibility, including innovative and creative support for micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, women, youth and vulnerable people.

100. Indonesia was promoting the creative economy as a means to economic recovery, growth and resilience. Connectivity between rural and urban areas should be promoted, provision for health, education and water expanded, and an enabling environment for sustainable development ensured to increase international trade as an engine for development. Markets must be opened, protectionism avoided, and the multilateral trading system strengthened. The specific needs of countries in special situations needed to be addressed.

101. Countries must prepare for a rapidly changing landscape. Technologies should be utilized for development, and safeguards put in place to mitigate the dark side of technological advances. New challenges and opportunities such as the blue ocean economy should be addressed. Full, effective and timely implementation of United Nations development activities should be ensured, and the system must be repositioned so that it was fit for purpose and value for money. The only way to solve the problems facing the world was to strengthen multilateralism, which was not a zero-sum game but a win-win solution for all.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.